Claims

1. A substantially anhydrous composition for preparing a hair lightener emulsion comprising:

an effective hair conditioning amount of a water-dispersible, self-emulsifying, fatty acid-derived conditioner;

an effective hair lightening amount of at least one peroxy salt compound;

optionally, an effective hair protective amount of a hair protectant, deswelling agent; and

optionally, a water-soluble cosmetic adjuvant;

wherein the composition is substantially free-flowing, and upon being mixed with a separately prepared aqueous medium for use as a hair lightener substantially immediately forms an emulsion.

2. The composition of claim 1 wherein the self-emulsifying, fatty acid-derived conditioner comprises a fatty ester, an ethoxylated glyceride, a fatty alcohol, a fatty ether, and any combination thereof, and any formulation thereof optionally containing at least one hydrophilic surfactant.

3. The composition of claim 1 or 2 wherein the self-emulsifying, fatty acid-derived conditioner comprises at least one polyhydric ester selected from the group consisting of a C_3-C_4 polyol ester of a C_6-C_{22} fatty acid; a glyceryl ester of a C_6-C_{22} fatty acid and at least one acid selected from the group consisting of citric acid, lactic acid and succinic acid; and a polyethoxylated C_{12}-C_{18} acylated sorbitol ester.

4. The composition of any one of claims 1 through 3 wherein the self-emulsifying, fatty acid-derived conditioner comprises predominantly a C_8-C_{10} fatty acid ester of a polyol selected from the group consisting of glycerin, propylene glycol, butylene glycol and mixtures thereof.

5. The composition of any one of claims 1 through 4 wherein the self-emulsifying fatty acid-derived conditioner comprises caprylic/capric triglyceride.

6. The composition of any one of claims 1 through 5 wherein the self-emulsifying fatty acid-derived conditioner comprises glyceryl cocoate/citrate/lactate.

7. The composition of any one of claims 1 through 6 wherein the self-emulsifying fatty acid-derived conditioner comprises PEG-40 sorbitan peroleate.

8. The composition of any one of claims 1 through 7 wherein the self-emulsifying, fatty acid-derived conditioner comprises a combination of caprylic/capric triglyceride, glyceryl cocoate/citrate/lactate, and PEG-40 sorbitan peroleate.

9. The composition of any one of claims 1 through 8 wherein the peroxy salt is selected from the group consisting of an alkali metal persulfate, ammonium persulfate, and mixtures thereof.

10. The composition of any one of claims 1 through 9 wherein the composition comprises a hair protectant, deswelling agent selected from the group consisting of a polyol and a cationic polymer.

11. The composition of claim 10 wherein the polyol is a carbohydrate.

12. The composition of claim 11 wherein the carbohydrate is a starch hydrolysate

13. The composition of claim 12 wherein the starch hydrolysate is a maltodextrin.

14. The composition of any one of claims 1 through 13 containing a cationic polymer.

15. The composition of claim 14 wherein the cationic polymer is polyquaternium-6.

16. A conditioning hair lightener emulsion prepared from at least two separate components, (A) and (B), wherein Component (A) is a composition of any one of claims 1 through 15 and Component (B) comprises an aqueous medium containing an effective hair lightening amount of hydrogen peroxide or source thereof, and wherein the hair lightener emulsion has a pH of at least about 8.

17. The conditioning hair lightener emulsion of claim 16 wherein a hair protectant, deswelling agent is present in at least one of Component (A) and (B).

18. A method of lightening hair comprising the steps of:

(i) contacting substantially dry hair with the conditioning hair lightener emulsion of any one of claims 16 or 17 and distributing the composition therethrough,

(ii) maintaining the applied conditioning hair lightener emulsion in contact with the hair for a period sufficient to visibly lighten the color of the hair to a desired shade level, to provide lightened hair, and

(iii) removing the hair lightener emulsion from the lightened hair.

19. The method of claim 18 wherein step (iii) is performed by rinsing the hair with water.

20. The method of any one of claims 18 or 19 wherein the lightened hair is contacted with a post-lightening aqueous acidic medium having a pH of not more than about 5 between steps (ii) and (iii).

21. The method of claim 20 wherein the aqueous acidic medium contains a cationic polymer.

22. The method of any one of claims 18 through 21 wherein the lightened hair is contacted with a post-lightening cationic conditioner after step (iii) and is removed with water.

23. The method of any one of claims 18 through 22 further including the step (iv) of washing the lightened hair with a shampoo having a pH in the range of about 4 to about 6.

24. A conditioning hair lightener system comprising at least two components, Component (A) and Component (B), wherein:

Component (A) is a composition of any one of claims 1 through 15, and

Component (B) is an aqueous medium containing hydrogen peroxide or hydrogen peroxide source,

wherein Component (A) and Component (B) are maintained separate, and substantially immediately before use, Component (A) and Component (B) are mixed together to provide a conditioning hair lightening emulsion having a pH of at least about 8.

25. The conditioning hair lightener system of claim 24 further including a post-lightening aqueous acidic medium having a pH of not more than about 5.

26. The conditioning hair lightener system of any one of claims 24 or 25 further including a post-lightening cationic hair conditioner.

27. The conditioning hair lightener system of any one of claims 24 through 27 further including a post-lightening shampoo having a pH in the range of about pH 4 to about 6.

28. The conditioning hair lightener system of any one of claims 24 through 27 wherein Component (A) includes a cationic polymer.

29. The conditioning hair lightener system of any one of claims 24 through 28 wherein at least one of Component (A) or Component (B) includes a hair protective, deswelling agent.

30. The conditioning hair lightener system of any one of claims 24 through 29 wherein the post-lightening, aqueous acidic medium includes a nonionic polymer, a cationic polymer or combination thereof.

31. An article of manufacture comprising a kit containing at least one composition of any one of claims 1 through 15 in packaged form.

32. The article of manufacture of claim 31 further including an aqueous medium containing hydrogen peroxide or hydrogen peroxide source in separately packaged form.

33. The article of manufacture of claims 31 or 32 further including one or more of the following:

a post-lightening aqueous acidic medium having a pH of not more than about 5;

a post-lightening cationic hair conditioner;

a post-lightening shampoo having a pH in the range of about 4 to about 6; each of the foregoing in separately packaged form; and

instructional indicia.

34. The article of manufacture of any one of claims 31 through 33 further including one or more hair lightening implements.